

## **SUMP PUMP IS A WISE INVESTMENT**

**Basements seem to be a natural catchall. Gravity seems to pull all sorts of unused and obsolete objects into basements.** When this clutter is mixed with a few inches of water brought in after heavy rains, two things happen: all the clutter is ruined and even if you prefer that everything stored in your basement would just float away, a sump pump is still a wise investment.

Several inches of water can often cause several thousand dollars in damage to basement structures, fixtures, furnaces, water heaters and appliances. Wet concrete or brick is tough to dry and the resulting mold and mildew can cause health problems.

A sump pump is basically a pump in the lowest part of the basement that will automatically turn on if the basement starts filling with water.

### **Types of Sump Pumps**

**Pedestal:** an electric pump with a motor a couple feet above the pump so it cannot get wet and a float-activated switch that turns the pump on when the water reaches a certain level.



**Submersible:** an electric pump installed in ground and designed to work under water. It has the same float-activated switch.

**Water-powered:** a pump that runs off the water pressure from your home plumbing system with the same float-activated switch. These pumps handle water at a much slower rate and are normally used as backups and kick in when the main pump experiences an electrical or mechanical failure.

**Installing a sump pump** is relatively simple and a good do-it-yourself project, but be certain:

- Water is discharged at least 20 feet from the building.
- Water does not drain back into the house.
- Install a check-valve on the output line so water that is pumped up the pipe does not come back down again when the pump cycles off.
- Many jurisdictions do not permit pumped water into public sewer systems and pumped water should never drain into a septic system.
- Be sure the pump has its own circuit so that it will not overload a shared circuit at a critical time.



## Grout Looking Dirty?

***Many people are their own worst enemy when it comes to tile floor maintenance.***

Grout is a cementitious product, it is porous and can absorb dirt and is also pH sensitive. This means that it does not like being cleaned with products which are too acidic, or too alkaline. Alkaline products (soapy, sudsy) will accumulate in the grout and actually attract dirt. Most of the time a nice bath in warm to hot water is all a tile floor needs (other than sweeping or vacuuming) to maintain its beautiful appearance. Over time, a nice steam bath from your local carpet steamer will remove any debris, or stains that become lodged in the grout. The rest of the time, just enjoy. Remember, a tile floor is created to be "low maintenance."



### Weed Control

While putting in your plants, wet some newspapers and put layers 10 - 12 sheets thick around the plants overlapping as you go. Cover with mulch and forget about weeds. Weeds will get through some gardening plastic they will not get through wet newspapers.

### Breakfast in Bed for Mom?

To really make scrambled eggs or omelets rich add a couple of spoonfuls of sour cream, cream cheese, or heavy cream in and then beat them up.

To warm biscuits, pancakes, or muffins that were refrigerated, place them in a microwave with a cup of water. The increased moisture will keep the food moist and help it reheat faster.

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## BUYING AN AIR CONDITIONER



Things to know when buying an air conditioner:

**Size an air conditioner carefully** because air-conditioning units serve to dehumidify, as well as cool. A unit that is too large will certainly cool, however, it will not remove enough moisture from the air. You will still be uncomfortable because of the moist air and

will have to call on the oversized unit to reduce the temperature three or four degrees more than if you had a properly sized unit.

**Check the unit for efficiency.** On the newer units you can look at the energy guide sticker. If it does not have an energy guide sticker, or you would like to know what it means, compare the BTUs or tonnage of the air-conditioning unit to the electrical draw amperage.

**Example:** if you have one ton of air conditioning (one ton is equivalent to 12,000 BTUs) and your unit draws 7.2 amps, it would be more efficient than a one ton unit that draws 8.0 amps.

**Note:** Simply check the metal label on the air-conditioning unit and look for the full load amps (FLA) or rated load amps (RLA) of the compressor.

